

798 unit & co.
gastropub unit

For immediate release
Hong Kong
April 9, 2007

[the news] **798 unit & co. opens its second outlet in Times Square**

Hot on the heels of its popular *bistro unit* in Tsim Sha Tsui, 798 unit & co. opens its second outlet, this time on Hong Kong island - at Times Square Causeway Bay – introducing the concept of the *gastropub*.

The term *gastropub* originated in the last decade in the UK, describing a pub which serves high-quality food. While we expect a bistro to be our original neighborhood restaurant serving honest, seasonal fare, a gastropub is more of an urban style restaurant & bar - a contemporary Anglo-equivalent of the French brasserie or the Japanese izakaya.

[the company] **798 unit & co. - redefining casual dining**

Inspired by Beijing’s contemporary art enclave “798”, the company’s name symbolizes the founders’ vision to create a company made up of individuals with a shared passion and vision for the urban dining culture.

As they put it—123456**798**—798 is an attitude/ brand/ identity that is synonymous with originality and a slightly irreverent attitude to life.

With 798 unit & co. *bistro unit*, and now its new *gastropub unit*, they have managed to achieve this with resounding success. 798 unit & co. is one of the few home-grown restaurant groups in Hong Kong which manages to create an original casual restaurant atmosphere with idiosyncratic touches of the West, wrapped in a hip, energetic vibe.

[the concept] **Gastropub**

The idea is to deliver really good food to the casual diner in a venue that is not intimidating and inductive to “hanging out” —a place **where everyone could drink and eat without necessarily needing a special occasion.**

As one of the founders Bridget Chen explains, “Our restaurants are about casual dining for the discerning.

What we are addressing is the “mass-tige” segment, delivering a *prestige* yet accessible dining experience to the *mass* market. Many people can afford to fine-dine everyday, but they are equally comfortable in a casual relaxing setting and eat straightforward, unpretentious, good food made from quality ingredients – without the complicated ceremony of haute cuisine. It a place you can return frequently because it is affordable and affable.”

Ultimately, 798 unit & co. aims to be a place that comes to mind when people are looking for a restaurant that is convivial, where friends congregate to enjoy the camaraderie and companionship that comes with sharing a meal - a concept that spans cultures and generations.

[the design] **An Urban Restaurant and Bar**

Rather than be fashionable, the owners subscribe to something far more **timeless** and stylish: good taste.

You cannot miss the restaurant as the elevator doors open onto the 12th floor of Food Forum, Times Square. A floor-to-ceiling retractable glass door spans the entire shopfront, allowing an unobstructed view of the bar and the movement inside – it is both attractive and inviting. Once inside, the place is unmistakably metropolitan: big loft-like open space, high ceilings, and a blackboard listing the day’s menu, making the place feel spontaneous and exciting. The design is direct and urban—plain sturdy tables and chairs with the odd emerald green fabric sofa, set against a backdrop of tiles, cast iron and raw paint. Mirroring 798’s Tsim Sha Tsui *bistro unit* is the signature floor of black and white checkered tiles.

A clean-lined wood veneered bar displaying a vast array of colorful bottles offers **counter dining** and underpins the “pub” feel, while the semi-open kitchen showcases bustling chefs at work emphasizes the “gastronomy” aspect – the dual essences of a gastropub.

[the food] **Back to Basics**

The menu is best described as contemporary European mainstream. Staying true to this format is a comprehensible and attractive menu that complements the assortment of beers and wines offered by a gastropub of this kind.

Along with the growing trend towards small plate dining, the menu offers an extensive list of enticing starters and tapas such as *parmesan crusted baby lamb loin* (\$55), *spicy octopus & chorizo* (\$45), *salmon gravlax* (\$60) to larger sharing plates of chef’s selection of charcuterie and olives.

The main courses are robust, straightforward dishes (with a marked absence of swirls and drizzles) combining bold flavors with down-to-earth cooking. Recommended is 798’s signature *Chargrilled U.S. Organic Pork Chop with roasted pineapple & apple-potato salad* (\$160), featuring a cut of high quality, pink succulent meat seldom this well-executed. A number of sharing dishes occupy the center stage and complement the large selection of wines available, e.g *Roasted Whole Chicken with rosemary* (\$238) and a hearty *Bouillabaisse Marseilles style* (\$400).

All-day dining dishes have a timeless appeal, including an irresistible juicy *Black Angus Beef Burger with onion marmalade and mushrooms* (\$125), *Fish n Chips* (\$95) and simple but flavorful pastas.

The same menu is available for dining at the bar counter.

Those who have been to 798 unit & co. at Tsim Sha Tsui know that the desserts are not to be missed. The 798 signature *Banoffi Pie* (\$42) is offered, along with new additions of *Trio of Chocolate* (\$55) and a dish aptly named *Lychee* (\$55), composed of lychee crème en gelee with almond crumble and lychee-ginger gelato. To end the perfect meal, 798 unit & co. servers premium Italian coffee by *Caffe Vergnano 1882*, a good indication of their dedication to quality.

True to a pub, draught beer is available alongside a large selection of bottled beer, including beer from Vietnam. The drink list revisits some of the old-fashioned classics like Whisky. One of 798's founders is a wine connoisseur and this is well reflected in its thoughtfully selected wine list.

Comfortable, convivial and unpretentious, 798 unit & co. is a welcome respite to the city.

[the facts]

798 unit & co. opens daily from noon – midnight.

798 unit & co.

gastropub unit

Shop 1203, 12/F Food Forum, Times Square

Causeway Bay

Tel. 2506 0611

798 unit & co.

bistro unit

1/F, 9 Hau Fook Street

Tsim Sha Tsui

Tel. 2366 0234

media contact:

Bridget Chen Tel. 2868 2914 / 9700 4780 Email. bridgetchen@798unit.com